

Transfiguration choir sings in Vienna

By *Jim Cornelius, News Editor*

The Germanic countries do Christmas like nobody else. It would be hard to envision a more immersive Christmas experience than a visit to Vienna at the beginning of advent.

That's the once-in-a-lifetime adventure shared by the Transfiguration Choir, based out of Sisters Episcopal Church of the Transfiguration. Sixteen singers from the choir returned last week from a prestige gig at the Vienna Advent Festival. The Transfiguration Choir was among dozens of vocal ensembles from around the world that participated in the event, staged at venues all across the historic city.

The choir was honored with a position among the choirs performing on the festival's opening night at Vienna's palatial city hall. It was a wonderful experience, despite challenges.

"Acoustically it was challenging," said choir director Stephanie King. "It's so big, the sound kind of gets lost in there."

Overcoming challenges was part of the experience for the singers. In one performance, they had to deviate from their prepared repertoire on the fly, because the previously performing choir had just done one of their planned songs. Like a quarterback calling an audible, King made the adjustment and the choir lifted their voices in song.



PHOTO BY SYDNEY HARRISON

Transfiguration Choir singing before the Schonbrunn Palace in Vienna, Austria.

One of their performances was in front of Schonbrunn Palace, a royal Hapsburg summer home. One of Europe's famed Christmas markets was going on in the shadow of the palace, and the choir's performance was mic'd and broadcast across the market for thousands to hear.

Speaking of Christmas markets, the choir made a side trip to Nuremburg, Germany, where one of the oldest and largest Christmas

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